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5230 Forest Insect Evaluation

August 11, 1972

Bark Beetles - (GATR Burn)

Forest Supervisor, Cleveland N.F.

Reference Jack Reveal's 5230 memorandum of July 26 requesting an evaluation of the GATR Burn. The District was concerned that ips beetles and the California flatheaded borer would build up in the fire-damaged timber and spread to the adjoining green timber.

On August 8, 1972, Ken Swain, Entomologist, Branch of Pest Control, accompanied by Jack Reveal made an evaluation of the GATR Burn.

On July 2, 1972 a fire burned about 80 acres of Jeffrey pine near Camp Ole in the Laguna Mountains (T.15S., R.5E., Sections 11 and 12). On examining the stand it was found that the fire was extremely hot and most of the trees were severely burned or had cooked cambium around the root collar. The phloem-cambium was drying rapidly on most of the trees checked, even though some green foliage remained. The exception was mainly on the perimeter of the burn, where the trees had sustained less damage.

Most of the fire-damaged timber had been attacked by secondary beetles, Buprestids (flatheaded borers), and Cerambycids (roundheaded borers). Additionally, some of the smaller trees had been attacked by the ips beetles (species not identified). Their brood development has been extremely rapid, and they were already in the callow adult or adult stage. A few trees have probably been attacked by the California flatheaded borer, Melanophila californica, which is the major forest insect in the Laguna Mountains. However, the evaluators were not able to positively identify any recent attacks.

Unfortunately, the fire was early in the tree's growing season. During this period Jeffrey pine is most susceptible to fire damage. They must retain sufficient green foliage to carry it through the remainder of the growing season and provide some food reserves for next year. Therefore, the later the fire the better the tree is prepared to withstand fire damage. When marking fire-damaged trees for logging, follow Wagener's "Guidelines for Estimating the Survival of Fire-Damaged Trees in California." (Copy attached.) It has been our experience, that for southern California, these guidelines tend to be conservative; therefore, when in doubt about a tree's survival--mark it!

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Presently, there is no great threat of a buildup of either ips or the California flatheaded borer in the burned area. The intensity of the fire and the hot summer weather had the effect of rapidly drying the cambium. This situation is not conducive to ips or California flatheaded borer attack. Additionally, most trees have large numbers of secondary borers, mining in the phloem-cambium area, leaving it unsuitable for further attack by primary bark beetles. However, since ips build up rapidly and have several generations a year in the Laguna Mountains, it would be desirable to dispose of the fire-damaged timber as soon as possible. The District is already planning a salvage sale. We concur with this action. The District is commended for their aggressive action. However, we know the difficulty of selling timber on the Cleveland National Forest, and if a salvage sale cannot be made, we suggest disposing of the timber by wood sales.

Remember to keep the area under close surveillance for insect buildup, particularly ips. If you have further need of technical advice from one of our entomologists, do not hesitate to contact us.

S/Norman E. Gould

NORMAN E. GOULD
Chief, Division of Timber Management

Attachment

KSwain:p1